

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2020
OPEN SESSION MINUTES**

Present: Mr. Whitten, Mr. Nylan, Ms. Cannon, Ms. Gilliam, Ms. Kneedler, Dr. O'Flynn,
Mr. Stevens, Dr. Blake, and Ms. Cuff

I. OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER - Mr. Whitten 7:03pm

READING OF DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT- Ms. Cannon

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Next Health/Safety Advisory Committee Meeting, 5pm 9/23
- Next Operations Committee Meeting, 6pm 9/23
- Next Budget Committee Meeting, 7pm 7/23
- Next Communications Committee Meeting, 3pm 9/29
- Next Policy Sub-Committee Meeting, 1pm 9/30
- Next Race & Equity Meeting, 2pm 9/30
- Next Oversight Committee Meeting, 3pm 9/30
- Next School Committee Meeting, 7pm 10/1
- Special Ed Informational Zoom Meeting, hosted by Dr. Hegedus, 4-5pm, 10/1

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

- Chat room question: Regarding 5th grade in general, lopsided resource allocation, disparity between in person teachers, remote teachers
 - Response from Dr. Blake: Broad strokes; done well with how resources have been allocated throughout the district. Each school, each grade level has different models based on student:staff needs - not same with # of teachers in front of kids; will hear more from principals during their presentations.
- Chat room question: Regarding commitment document, his student did not receive synchronous learning on remote days.
 - Dr. Blake responded that the principals will speak to that in their presentations.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Shoutout to all staff & administrators for their collective efforts to get students in buildings. Students & staff are excited to be back - saw smiles on parents faces. Great to have the buildings open to students.
- Mr. Whitten thanked Dr. Blake as well for his impressive work during this entire process.

SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT 7:08pm

Dr. Brian Blake, Superintendent

- Busy preparing, opening schools
- Ipswich Aware Board meeting
- Communications & Policy sub-committee meetings
- Northshore Education Consortium Board Meeting
- Working with CVS for a district flu vaccine clinic
- Met with the IEA president

- Had conference calls with DESE Commissioner - many school districts seeing significant decline in student population. We have had a few choosing to home school, but our enrollment has not declined significantly.
- EdEval Meeting
- Participated in MA Association of School Superintendents webinars
- Met with Administrators
- Participated in Tri-Board Chair conference call
- PD Committee met to discuss October's Professional Development day
- School Reopening Operations meeting
- Participated in North Shore Superintendent Roundtable ZOOM

II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

- A. PIANO DONATION APPROVAL - Dr. Blake 7:16pm
- Lisa Palance - Aileen Blanchard approached Lisa spring to donate a baby grand piano, has paid to store it through September, deliver it to Doyon, and remove the old piano. This is a significant upgrade and Ms. Blanchard has done everything in her power to get this done.
- Mr. Nylen made a motion to accept the donation of a baby grand piano from Aileen Blanchard, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn, and the roll call vote passed unanimously in favor.***
- B. RETURN TO LEARN UPDATE - Dr. Blake 7:20pm
1. Schools open, gone very well
 2. Keeping up w/sanitizing, cleaning
 3. Work continues to be done, hepa filters in
 4. Univents are operational, other systems nearing completion
 5. Ionizers will be worked on next week
 6. UVC coming
 7. Ipswich has done more in our buildings and for staff & students than colleagues report has been done in other districts
 8. Key is flexibility, utilizing teaching models; making course adjustments as we can; 1st checkpoint is in October. Several parents now want their students in school, after having chosen remote only. Space will continue to be an issue with the ½ and ½ hybrid. Shifting would be a problem for 6' social distancing. CDC & DESE guidelines are now 3'.
 9. Dr. O'Flynn asked by what criteria we will utilize 3' rather than 6' to allow more kids in school. Dr. Blake reiterated that it has to do with case counts, positivity rate in Ipswich (currently at .33%), conversations with administrators, health department, et al. There is no established criteria at the moment. The 6' vs 3' was a point of contention with the IEA and MOU states 6' distancing. Need to establish a process to determine the criteria to allow more students in-person. We focused on the hybrid pivot to all remote learning, but now need to look at a possible pivot to all in-person learning. Contact tracing will be affected if distancing is shortened to 3'.
 10. Ms. Cuff reported that bussing went well for 1st week, looked at ridership. There are 28 routes, 3 with over 20 students/route; 18 routes have 10-20 students. Looking at waiting lists to get more students on board. Meeting with Salter next week, may have to shift routes to get as many on board as possible; trying our best. There have only been 2 days for Cohort A and only 1 day for Cohort B, so there has not been enough time to analyze. Waiting list is currently 50 - cohorts are key. Right now more people are riding on Thursdays & Fridays. Bus routes are posted on website. Emails were sent via ASPEN to those parents whose students were assigned a seat on a bus. (Those parents indicated the need for transportation on the parent survey, and those who lived furthest

away from the schools were given priority.) Parents can check in at the building level or call Central Administration tomorrow to see if their registration is on file.

C. SCHOOL OPENING PRESENTATION - Administrators

7:30pm

1. Thanks to all for a smooth reopening. Many members stated the first day of remote was much more vigorous than in the spring.
2. High School - Mr. Mitchell/Mr. Carovillano
 - Done well, went pretty smoothly. Parade with music, staff cheering - great for teachers AND students, grateful for last 2 weeks to prepare
 - Great to have all kids back - informal feedback was positive about hybrid approach; understanding; back in building after 6 month absence
 - The student representative for the school committee will be chosen after class elections, which were delayed due to shutdown.
 - Thanks for relieving anxiety among 9th graders.
 - Models: want to make sure we get through curriculum at each grade level; remote log in to watch/interact with their in person classes (Room & Zoom). Teachers have tried new technology, making mistakes, learning from them.
 - Shout out to Amy Gregory & Keith Borgen - found 70 microphones for Chromebooks. Great to be working on the tech side so that remote kids feel more involved.
3. Middle School - Ms. McMahon & Mr. Fitzgerald
 - Smooth opening, teachers music, signs, cheering.
 - All happy to be back in building
 - Amazing team effort, community-building experience
 - Custodians have done a phenomenal job, responded to all requests, amazing feat
 - Shout out to cafeteria staff, delivering great food, friendly
 - Many thanks to nursing staff who, without all parts/pieces, made it work.
 - Teachers have given their all to learn new techniques; PD Choice Board/webinars already in place in the lessons.
 - In-person attendance rate was really good, Usually technology glitch for remote kids (almost 100% attendance on both sides)
 - Wednesday allowed administrators to speak with staff to get feedback
 - Parents have been amazingly supportive, given thoughtful feedback
 - Chat question: How is Wednesday asynchronous learning working? Teachers offer 2 "office hours", rest of the day is asynchronous so staff can do curriculum work, meetings, collaborate, etc. This week was get-to-know-you. As the year moves forward, there will be more asynchronous work.
4. Doyon
 - Only 15 students are full remote.
 - Staff and students are thrilled to be back.
 - 3 grade levels w/overflow classrooms. Challenging. 3 teachers are teaching remotely from home. Reading & math specialists are working with younger grade levels in person because of loss of time last year. 5th grade concerns are valid. There are only 7 remote students: 1 teacher. 24-28 students in other classes. New teacher plus new special ed teacher and a fellow is working in 5th grade - they are trying to reorganize. Hopefully, remote teacher will be able to work with other in-person students. New nurse started today. Many thanks to Paula Butt & Jen Reed for setting up the office. Lots of new hires for TAs. Arrival/dismissal has been difficult since so many parents are transporting.

Tents are great. Thanks to office staff and special ed program manager. Most special ed students are in-person 4 days. The police also helped with traffic.

- Dr. O'Flynn asked about portable toilets because COVID is prevalent in them because of lack of ventilation. The portable toilets have portable sinks next to them; 200+ children in building with only 2 boys bathrooms and 2 girls bathrooms, not enough with social distancing. The portable toilets are cleaned & locked every night. Very few have used them; however, teacher/staff are outside the door every time it is used. Tom Gallagher/Athletics? Installed inside the stadium, using electrostatic cleaning before & after events. They can only be opened by key (by game staff/ administrators/custodian) for events. There are hand sanitizing station outside and inside.
- Ms. Cannon questioned why some students are receiving 4 days of in person learning, while others are not. Is it consistent across schools? This is a big equity issue that needs to be addressed. Ms. Halloran said she offered 4 in-person days to all of the special ed students and most parents chose that option. The middle and high school principals stated that each special ed student was evaluated for services included on their IEPs, their needs were taken into account, and decisions were made based on those. They will continue to evaluate and make changes as needed.

5. Winthrop

- Schools need kids, kids need schools. Staff have been incredibly flexible to make it work.
- 2 weeks prep was key.
- Model in some of rooms - remote & in-person synchronous; in other cases, a remote teacher is zooming into classroom for support. There have been some tech issues, but we are finding our way.
- Ipswich police have been present, walked through to make people feel safe.
- Outdoor learning is different, DPW stepped up with logs to sit on; the Recreation Department provided a van to move kids around. Resilience is our theme - seen all over. Learning as we go.
- At times we overwhelmed kids with technology, but teachers and administrators are finding a balance of on-screen/off-screen activities.
- There are 44 remote only students, capacity in building (in both old elementary buildings) is an issue. Ms. McAdams even asked some staff to be remote(outside, home, etc.) in order to get as many kids as possible in building.
- Did not offer 4 days to every special ed student. DESE mandata was to provide the most vulnerable, high need kids with as many in-person days as possible. Winthrop has high poverty level, had to take a look at that, when it came to 4 day learning. In the lower grades IEP, many students have not yet been identified as special ed because of loss of time last year; older students' numbers have gone up. It will be a challenge to balance how to figure out who needs more services.
- 5th grade class sizes: 21 in each of 3 classes, only 8 are remote only.
- Many thanks to ALL. Never seen anyone work as a community as Ipswich has this year.

D. ATHLETICS UPDATE - Mr. Gallagher

8:00pm

1. Practices & tryouts tomorrow.

2. All CAL schools (one has since been designated in the red zone) were given approval to participate in Fall 1 - Cross Country, Field Hockey, Soccer, & Golf
3. Game schedules went public this afternoon can be found on MAScores website.
4. CAL is currently looking at post-season for those sports. MIAA will not have post-season tournaments.
5. Coaches sharing info with players/families regarding tryouts.
6. Registration numbers are nearly identical to years past. 145 athletes over 4 sports.
7. There are no middle school sports in CAL this fall; maybe winter or spring - will keep working on it.
8. Mr. Gallagher sent emails with FAQ to families.
9. Held a great 3-hour coaches' meeting on Tuesday, working hard to get started.
10. Thanks to Athletics Assistant Nikki Laroche; Athletic Trainer Kelley Michael, and Athletic Custodian Jon Larsen.
11. Safety: Governor's office is overseeing sports. Modifications have been made; masks required; practices in cohorts; scheduling: reduced number of contacts with teams/athletes/coaches. Will only function within CAL, no non-league games. Limit athletes to 23 on buses, assigned seats. Field hockey went to 7 vs. 7; soccer no contact, heading ball, et al.

Dr. Blake said we are only 4 days into the year; we know that there are wrinkles to iron out - some expected, some unexpected. Will keep plugging along, it won't be perfect.

E. FINANCE UPDATE - Ms. Cuff

8:22pm

1. Business office has been incredibly busy. Purchasing was increased, not only setting up in normal ways, but had to move asap to receive items in time. We were ahead of the game going into the school year; have equipment and software. Increased demands on payroll & personnel, new hiring at last minute, paying people under new COVID-19 laws. Our new payroll person is doing a great job; and we are training a new business office clerk. The business office has been in-district day after day, plugging away.
2. Financially, doing as well as can be. Taking advantage of all the COVID-19 funding we can find - currently \$956K earmarked for COVID-19 costs.
3. Appropriated budget is good, positive balances, food services profitability may not be positive, athletics may have issues. Federal government allowed us to provide meals to students at no charge, but as part of legal declaration of how to spend funds, there is debate as to whether someone can sell items a la carte (extra fruit, piece of pizza) - concerned that they will take funds away from us, which is concerning since that boosts profit margin. Question regarding whether or not we have to turn it back if not used right away. No, but there are deadlines for some and we fully expect to spend it all. We are hoping for a 2nd wave of federal funding for more purchases after January.

F. STM WARRANT ARTICLE DISCUSSION AND VOTE

Mr. Whitten

8:30pm

- Bob Weatherall - Chair Public Safety article
 - Wanted to be available if SC had questions about the article; seeking support for funding to build a new building. Mr. Whitten will take a vote to recommend it for the warrant.
- Discussion regarding individual articles as they voted to support, RATM, or take no position. Articles requiring a vote to support were taken individually and by roll call vote as noted on the Special Town Meeting Control Sheet (attached).

- G. POLICY APPROVAL - Ms. Gilliam 9:09pm
1. EBC Supplemental: Interim Policy on COVID-Related Issues recommended by MASC - review of new policy

Dr. O'Flynn made a motion to approve the EBC Supplemental: Interim Policy on COVID-Related Issues as written, Ms. Cannon seconded, and the roll call vote passed unanimously in favor.

III. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS 9:12pm

A. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. POLICY - Ms. Gilliam: Met on 9/4 and 9/30. Will now begin to go through 3-year review process.
2. COMMUNICATION - Ms. Gilliam: Met on 9/4, reviewed 2021 goals; next meeting is 9/29; Mr. Stevens & Ms. Gilliam (maybe Ms. Kneedler) to attend a 9/21 webinar on social media; next newsletter on 9/30. Mr. Whitten commended the committee on its phenomenal goals document.
3. TRAVERSO WETHERALL GRANTS - one month out; Mr. Whitten & Ms. Cannon to meet/discuss; information meeting early October.

B. WORKING GROUP REPORTS

1. Oversight Committee - Dr. Blake: meeting every other week, hearing reports from administrators and IEA expressing ongoing concerns with air handling systems, particularly at IMS/IHS. Positivity rate is currently at .33%, 88 cases. Another meeting is scheduled in 2 weeks.
2. Climate Resiliency - Mr. Nysten: working on resolution to be proposed to Town on the climate goal of achieving renewable energy by 2040, with benchmarks along the way. Will come to the school committee to discuss eventually; a nice together a nice briefing paper to understand terms. Will hear more in fall.

C. LIAISON REPORTS

1. SEPAC - Ms. Cannon: Still trying to figure out when ZOOM will take place, submitted questions to Dr. Hegedus a month ago, awaiting her response. Need to know why are schools offering different plans, holding spots for future need is not good practice. Need to discuss how to prioritize services to students.
2. STEAM Team - Ms. Gilliam: meeting 10/27
3. Ipswich Education Fund - Ms. Gilliam: 9/28 meeting
4. Birth to 3 - Ms. Gilliam: 1st meeting scheduled for October
5. Feoffees - Mr. Stevens: Trust administrators must give its funding estimate by 10/1, but asked for extension to 10/30.

Mr. Stevens made a motion authorize the extension of the original 10/1/2020 date to 10/31/2020, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn, and the roll call vote passed unanimously in favor.

- D. NEW BUSINESS* - Next school committee meeting to include a vote on goals

IV. CONSENT 9:25pm

A. CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Gilliam made a motion to approve the Open Session meeting minutes from September 3, 2020 and accept the \$1,000 donation from the Roberts Family to be deposited in the Winthrop School Gift Account, seconded by Mr. Nysten, and the roll call vote passed unanimously in favor.

Mr. Whitten thanked the Roberts family for their generous gift.

V. ADJOURNMENT 9:33pm

Dr. O'Flynn made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Kneedler seconded, and the hand vote passed unanimously in favor.

Article		Recommendation				
#	Title	SB	FinCom	School Committee	Main Motion Speaker	SB Response If Needed or Expected
1	Stabilization Funding	5-0	9-0	no position		
2	Capital Plan	5-0	9-0	7-0 in support	Dr. O'Flynn moved, Ms. Gilliam seconded	<i>Will need a SC speaker for Article 2</i>
3	Amend FY21 School Budget Funding	5-0	9-0	7-0 in support	Mr. Nylen moved, Mr. Stevens seconded	
4	Planning – Adult Use Marijuana	5-0	9-0	no position		
5	Planning – Registered Marijuana Dispensaries (RMD'S)	5-0	9-0	no position		
6	Planning – Clarification Amendment	5-0	9-0	no position		
7	Planning - Energy Efficiency Related Zoning Changes	4-0-1	RATM	RATM		
8	Pineswamp Road Land Purchase – Proposed Public Safety Building Location	5-0	8-1 (Support)	7-0	Dr. O'Flynn moved, Mr. Stevens seconded	
9	Public Safety Building Design Funds	5-0	6-3 (Support)	7-0	Mr. Nylen moved, Dr. O'Flynn seconded	
10	Gov't Study Committee – Waterways Committee Article	5-0	9-0	no position		
11	Amend Chapter 138 – Demolition Review	3-2 (Support)	8-1 (Support)	no position		
12	Amend Chapter 109 – Animals	5-0	8-1 (Support)	no position		
13	Water Department Main Replacement	5-0	9-0	7-0	Mr. Nylen moved, Mr. Stevens seconded	
14	Sewer Easements required for Wastewater Infrastructure Work	5-0	9-0	no position		
15	Kamon Farm Land Purchase on Pineswamp Road	5-0	9-0	no position		

16	Citizen Petition – Implementation of Water Use Mitigation Plan	RATM	9-0 (Support Taking No Action on this Article)	no position		
17	Citizen Petition – Two-year Building Permit Moratorium	3-2 (To Not Support the Article)	9-0 (To Not Support the Article)	7-0 (to NOT support the Article)	Dr. O’Flynn moved, Mr. Nysten seconded	
18	Citizen Petition – Remove Inclusionary Housing Payment-in-Lieu-of Option for non-fractional Affordable Housing Units	RATM	9-0 (To Not Support the Article)	no position		